
what's up doc?



by Dr. Mary Livers

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Hello, Everyone:

I guess all that news about the post office closing has scared almost everybody off from mailing Christmas cards this year, not to mention spending 41 cents a pop to mail one card. That **MUST** be why we have only **FOUR** cards on our office door, when it was full of cards last year. Bah humbug.

Well, as ever, it's been a busy week but a good week. Tuesday we had the Celebration of Change event at Jetson, and that is always a very uplifting experience for me, as well as the guests, staff and youth. The program was packed with great things, and I don't know what made me more proud, presenting the second annual Champion of Louisiana Juvenile Award, announcing a significant decrease in our overall recidivism rates, or listening to **Youth Collin A.** almost steal the show, as he gave a history of Jetson, sounding almost like a professional speaker. As you know by now, this year's recipient of the Champion of LA Juvenile Justice Award is Beauregard Parish **District Attorney David Burton**. DA Burton is so deserving of the recognition, for all he has done to support reform and move toward the graduated sanctions and more effective services for kids that we see today. Since the late 1990s, he has made a positive difference in the juvenile justice system in Louisiana. You may remember we created the award last year to recognize individuals who have championed the cause of juvenile justice reform, and have exhibited dedication to providing better conditions and services for our youth. Our thanks to DA Burton, who made a very gracious and meaningful acceptance speech. Program highlights also included entertainment by the Jetson Choir while we enjoyed a sumptuous luncheon a la' **Chef Ron Sonnier** and his Culinary Arts students. Many thanks to Jetson **Director Daron Brown** and his staff, who decorated the gym with a beautiful Christmas theme and presented an impressive program. Stay tuned for upcoming celebration events at Bridge City and Swanson.

Swanson has a news director on board – please join me in welcoming **Director Vickie Shoecraft**, who arrived to assume leadership of Swanson last week. Vickie is a native of Oklahoma City, and a graduate of the University of Oklahoma, with a Bachelors degree in law enforcement administration and a Masters degree in human relations. She brings over 20 years of experience in the field of corrections to her position. Watch for more information about Director Shoecraft in the near future.

I was able to speak at the annual luncheon meeting of the Louisiana Chapter of the National Institute of Governmental Purchasing (LANIGP), which supports the government purchasing profession. There were about 150 people in attendance, and I had the opportunity to tell members of the organization about OJJ and who we are. I think it went pretty well – I saw only one person falling asleep during my talk. I am very pleased to announce that OJJ's own **Procurement Specialist Nona Holmes** has been elected to the board. Also present were former OJJ procurement specialist **Elaine Buzbee**, as well as **Budget Manager Adina Kyles** and our new **Budget Analyst Deljorie Huff**. I attended the annual luncheon two years ago, and at that time I offered to speak to the group. Although they took me up on it, with obligations such as appearing before the budget committee, I was unable to attend until now. So, my talk has been two years in the making – I hope it was worth their wait. Well, I did have them laughing a little, so that was good.

Time to end, with my thanks, as ever, for all that each one of you, in every OJJ office and facility, does every day, to meet the mission. **You are OJJ**. Hope you have a lovely weekend-before-Christmas and that all your cooking, cleaning, shopping and gift wrapping go well.

Sincerely, "Doc" *Dr. Mary Livers*

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